

What are we contacting you about?

We have now received a new application from Gent Fairhead & Co. Ltd ('the company') for an Environmental Permit for the proposed Rivenhall Integrated Waste Management Facility (IWMF). We therefore want to summarise what the application is for and explain our decision making process, in particular our arrangements for public consultation.

The new permit application

The new application provides for exactly the same waste management activities and waste volumes as set out in the company's first application to us in November 2015 which we refused in December last year.

The new application therefore proposes the operation of a facility comprising an Anaerobic Digestion plant, a Materials Recovery facility, a Mechanical Biological Treatment facility, an Energy from Waste (incineration) plant together with a de-inking and paper pulping facility. The Energy from Waste plant is still proposed to burn up to 595,000 tonnes of non-hazardous waste per year.

The only materially significant change in the new application is that the incinerator stack height is now proposed to be 55 metres (above surrounding ground levels). As explained in our last briefing note, our grounds for refusing the company's first application were that the company had failed to demonstrate to us that the design of the waste plant will use Best Available Techniques (BAT) to reduce emissions and their impact on the environment. In particular, the company had failed to demonstrate to us that the proposed incinerator stack height (35 metres) constitutes BAT.

The new application provides for the same 'closed loop' water management arrangements, namely utilisation of an existing abstraction licence to remove and use water from the River Blackwater but with no discharge of process waters back to the river.

What happens next?

We will now subject the permit application to full consultation. In addition to various organisations that we consult, including Public Health England, we will be consulting the public.

The consultation period runs from 9 March 2017 to 13 April 2017.

Full details of the permit application have been placed on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/co5-9df-gent-fairhead-and-co-limited-environmental-permit-application-advertisement-eprfp3335yua001>

The public can make consultation responses to us online at: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/co5-9df-gent-fairhead-and-co-limited-fp3335yua001>

We will also hold exhibition/drop-in events in the local area. Our technical staff will be available at these events to explain our role, the decision making process and answer questions. The drop-in events will take place as follows:

Monday 20 March, 2pm-7pm at Silver End Village Hall, Broadway CM8 3RQ

Friday 31 March, 2pm-7pm at Christ Church, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall CO6 1UH

As the company is also seeking to change the current planning permission restriction on stack height, officers from Essex County Council's Planning Department will also be attending these events and will be available to answer questions on planning related issues.

We will advertise the application in the Public Notices in the Braintree & Witham Times. We will also issue a press release and promote the consultation on Twitter. We will place full copies of the application in Kelvedon and Coggeshall libraries (available to view from 13 March 2017).

The new permit application for the proposed Rivenhall IWMF will be subject to all the procedural and technical requirements of the first application. However, as the only material change is the revised stack height, we expect to be able to determine this application within a shorter timeframe than the first application.

At the end of the decision making process, and following consideration of all the consultation responses that we receive, if we decide to issue an Environmental Permit we would only do so following a further round of consultation. We would provide further details of our public consultation nearer the time should this be our determination outcome on the application.

Where can I get more information?

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this briefing note or arrange a visit to speak to one of our staff and view the new permit application, our Feering office can be contacted on 02030 258527 or 02030 258390 or by e-mail:

frank.saunders@environment-agency.gov.uk

Should you wish to receive copies of Public Register information relating to the permit application we refused in December last year, please contact our Customers & Engagement Team on 02030 255472 or by e-mail:

enquiries_eastanglia@environment-agency.gov.uk